

From the Editor's desk

I sometimes wonder what is the primary dilemma of contemporary India. A historian is in a better position to enlighten us in this matter. As an individual, I am just a member of the huge scientific community that India nurtures today. It is this community through which India is trying to fulfill her 'will to power'.

Science and technology, in its present form, is a product of western civilization. This is the epoch of westernization of the world, westernization of the entire human civilization. All other ways of life, all other values, are fighting a lost battle against it. In the context of India, this fact can be grasped if we consider a catchy word that has become very fashionable nowadays. I mean, the word 'globalization'. There is no word which makes such a ridiculously different semantics in our consciousness than its actual dictionary meaning. We pronounce the 'globe' but think of only Europe and America. As if the rest of the world is outside the globe. What globalization? Globalization of what? Commodity products? Narcotics? Michel Jackson? Capital? Workers of the third world? Poverty? Pollution?

Bankimchandra once wrote: " ' Knowledge is power ' – says the western civilization. 'Knowledge is salvation' – the Hindu civilization says. Thus two different people took the same path for two different destinations. The westerners has acquired power, have we got salvation? It is obvious that the same journey has produced different results. Europeans are worshippers of power –that is the root cause of their upliftment. We are careless about power –that is the root cause of our degradation. Europeans have tried to search their destination in this world – that is why they are victorious on earth. Our destination is in the other world – therefore we are loser on the earth. Whether we shall win in the other world is a debatable point. " (*Bankimchandra Chattopadhyay*, *Sankhya Darshan*).

All Indian philosophy has a single purpose – salvation from sorrow, or 'moksha' (*Rajshekhhar Basu*, preface to *Srimadbhagabatgita*). The entire corpus of science and technology which has come down to us from the western civilization is a living antithesis to this idea. For one thing, as a problem solver technology has no match. Buddha can give you solace but he can not prevent your son from dying of rabbi – once it sets in. But science can. What thousands years of preaching could not ensure for women, a few contraceptives have – the end of uncertainties of life. Science has shown that it is no longer needed to transcend a problem in order to cope with it – a stance taken by all religious preaching – but it is possible to solve the problem in a much more effective and efficient way without personal transformation. Man, at last, has been convinced that it is possible to be happy in *this* world and it is worthwhile to pursue happiness on earth. After two thousand years of birth of Jesus, man really has committed the original sin.

Who can ultimately make humanity happy ? Doubt, i.e. the fundamental methodological tool of science, or Faith i.e. the essence of religion? Or both – blended together by the unknown alchemist working inside the darkness of human consciousness? Who will win? Perhaps history will give the answer. This edition of '*Reason*' will pass into oblivion by that time.

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